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# The Case for the 'Europeanization' of NATO

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GUEST COLUMN FOR ANDREW TULLY BY SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

August 7, 1970

THE CASE FOR THE "EUROPEANIZATION" OF NATO

On October 26, 1963, the late President Eisenhower said in an interview in the Saturday Evening Post:

"Though for eight years in the White House I believed and announced to my associates that a reduction of American strength in Europe should be initiated as soon as European economies were restored, the matter was then considered too delicate a political question to raise. I believe the time has now come when we should start withdrawing some of those troops. . . . One American division in Europe can 'show the flag' as definitely as can several."

It is now almost seven years since that statement was made, over 25 years since World War II ended in Europe and over 21 years since the North Atlantic Treaty was signed. Yet we still

have 300,000 U.S. military men in Western Europe, two-thirds of them in West Germany alone, and our forces in Western Europe are accompanied by some 200,000 dependents and 8,000 U.S. nationals employed by the Defense Department as civilians in related jobs. There are, thus, over 510,000 Americans in Western Europe either in our military forces or associated with those forces, a larger American presence than in Vietnam today.

The cost of that overseas garrison is enormous. The current estimate is that the budgetary cost of our NATO commitment, the cost to the U.S. taxpayer, is \$14 billion a year while the balance of payments drain resulting from our military deployment in Europe is currently about \$1.5 billion a year or almost a third of our total balance of payments deficit on a liquidity basis. Part of this foreign exchange drain goes for the salaries of local nationals employed by our military in Europe, part for



the costs of buildings used by our forces, part for transportation, power and other services, part for runways, roads and other "infrastructure" items and part for property, business, import, excise and other taxes paid to foreign governments.

Unlike the situation 20 years ago, the economies of the European countries are, of course, no longer ravaged by the effects of war, as anyone visiting Europe can easily see.

Yet we continue to devote a larger share of our resources, our men and money to defense than our European allies, in part because we have continued to keep over half a million Americans in Europe at government expense for two decades. We maintain a higher rate of defense expenses per capita and a higher percentage of our gross national product in defense expenditures than any other NATO country, and we have a higher percentage of men of military age in the armed forces than every other NATO country except Portugal.

One of my colleagues in the Senate recently suggested that now that we have adopted a policy of "Vietnamization," designed to turn a progressively larger share of the defense of Vietnam over to the Vietnamese, we should put into effect a policy of "Europeanization" in NATO. With this aim in mind, I have submitted Senate Resolution 292 calling for "a substantial reduction of U.S. forces permanently stationed in Europe." A majority of the members of the Senate have expressed their support for this resolution.

It should be emphasized that this resolution does not urge that all U.S. troops be brought home or that we should reduce our forces precipitately. Nor does the resolution imply that we will not continue to honor our solemn obligations to our NATO allies. On the contrary, it states that such a reduction



could be made "without adversely affecting either our resolve or ability to meet our commitment under the North Atlantic Treaty."

But the NATO countries also have a commitment under the North Atlantic Treaty, as well as an obligation to themselves for their own defense. Without continuing to rely on 200 million Americans to the extent that they have to date, the 280 million people of the European countries in NATO, with their tremendous industrial resources and long military experience, should be able to organize an effective coalition to defend themselves against 235 million Russians who are, after all, contending at the same time with some 350 million Chinese.

The policy of the present Administration, enunciated in the Guam Doctrine, is to help other Asian nations to help

defend themselves. It is time to apply that doctrine to Europe.

The status quo has been safe and comfortable for our European allies but it has diminished their interest in their own defense, distorted the relationship between Europe and the United States and diverted our resources from the urgent problems we face at home.